Government of Karnataka from doing the same?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) to (c) Upper Krishna Project comprises of Upper Krishna Stage-I and Stage-II. Stage-I Project was initially approved by the the Planning ommission in November, 1963 at an estimated cost of Rs. 58.2 crores for irrigating an area of 2.424 lakh hectares (Ha). Subsequently, after examining various techno-economic and inter-State aspects, the revised project to irrigate an area of 4.25 lakh hectares was approved at an estimated cost of Rs. 283.65 crores during April, 1978. Upper Krishna Project Stage-I now comprises of two dams namely, Narayanapur and Almatti across river Krishna having a combined live storage of about 60 thousand Million Cubic feet (TMC). The project envisages annual water utilisation of 119 thousand Million Cubic Feet (TMC). Recently, the revised estimate of the Upper Krishna Project Stage-I has been cleared by the Planning Commission at the cost of Rs. 1215 crores approximately. The Karnataka State Government has not finalised and sent the Upper Krishna Project Stage-II to the Centre for appraisal.

Issue of Commemorative Postal Stamps

1280. SHRI RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the procedure followed by the Government for issue of commemorative postal stamps in the country?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): A Philatelic Advisory Committee functions to advise the Government regarding issue of commemorative postage stamps and other related matters. Proposals for issue of commemorative stamps received from various sources are examined in consultation with the Philatelic Advisory Committee and with reference to the prescribed guidelines. Issue of a limited number of commemorative stamps is approved during an year keeping in view the guidelines, recommendations of the Philatelic Advisory Committee and various other factors. In exceptional cases decisions are also taken with the approval of the Minister for Communications.

Telephone Facility to Villages of Chhota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana of Bihar

1281. SHRI KARIYA MUNDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide telephone facility to all the villages of Chhota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana of Bihar in near future; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is proposed to provide telephone facilities in village Panchayats during Eighth Plan and the remaining villages in the Nineth Plan.

[*Translation*]

Execution of Soviet Technician by ULFA

1282. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the kidnapping and subsequent execution of the Soviet technician Gritchenki by ULFA militants of Assam;

(b) if so, the efforts made earlier by the Government to secure his release; and

(c) the details of the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to prevent the recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) According to information received from the Government of Assam, Shri Gritchenko Sergei was kidnapped by ULFA militants on 1-7-91 and later killed.

(b) On 3-7-91, the ULFA through a Press Release demanded release of six hard-core ULFA militants by 6 p.m. on 9-7-91 in exchange of release of Shri Gritchenko and another kidnapped official. On 8-7-91, the Chief Minister, Assam announced his decision to release the six hard-core militants over AIR and Doordarshan and they were actually released at 5.00 P.M. on 9-7-91.

(c) The State Government have intensified the security arrangements to prevent recurrence of such incidents and all help is being given to them.

Joint Meeting of Officers of India and Bangladesh

1283. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a joint meeting of Officers of India and Bangladesh was held recently at Udaipur in South Tripura;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

(c) whether measures to check the continuous intrusion from across the border also figured in the talks;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Officers of India and Bangladesh also discussed the matter regarding repair of the poles along the border; and

(f) if so, the time by which the repair work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir, a joint meeting of the officials of India and Bangladesh was held at Udaipur in South Tripura.

(b) The above mentioned meeting was held on February 18, 1991 at the level of District Magistrate, South Tripura (India) and Deputy Commissioner, Khagrachari (Bangladesh) to discuss the modalities of the repatriation of Chakma refugees to Bangladesh. Little progress was made as the representatives of Chakma refugees expressed their inability to return to Bangladesh in view of the conditions there being unsuitable for their return and the non-fulfilment of their demands.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Production of Steel

1284. SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the annual production of steel in the country during 1990-91;

(b) the quantity of steel being imported annually;

(c) whether the Government propose to formulate any scheme to increase the production of steel; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The production of finished steel during the year 1990-91 was 13.4 million tonnes.

(b) About 1.5 million tonnes of steel is being imported annually.

(c) and (d) The steps taken for increasing steel production include:

Modernisation of steel plant and improved maintenance of plant